

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended): An essentially ceramic target for a sputtering device, said target comprising predominantly nickel oxide NiO_x, wherein the nickel oxide is oxygen-deficient with respect to the stoichiometric composition NiO, wherein x is less than 1 and wherein the target has an electrical resistivity of less than 10 ohm.cm.

2. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 1, wherein the stoichiometric deficiency stems from the composition of the intimate blend formed by nickel oxide powders and nickel powders.

3-4 (Canceled).

5. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 1, wherein the nickel oxide is alloyed to a minority element.

6. (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein the atomic percentage of the minority element is less than [[500]] 50%, calculated with respect to the nickel.

7. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein the minority

element is a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with anodic coloration.

8. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 7, wherein the minority element is selected from the group consisting of Co, Ir, Ru, Rh, and mixtures thereof.

9. (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein[[,]] the minority element is a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with cathodic coloration.

10. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 9, wherein the minority element is selected from the group consisting of Mo, W, Re, Sn, In, Bi, and a mixture of these elements.

11. (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein[[,]] the minority element is selected from the elements belonging to the column one of the Periodic Table.

12. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 11, wherein the minority element is selected from the group consisting of H, Li, K, and Na.

13. (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein[[,]] the minority element is a metal or an alkaline earth or a semiconductor, the hydrated or hydroxylated oxide of which is protonically conductive.

14. (Previously Presented): The target as claimed in claim 13, wherein the minority element is selected from the group consisting of Ta, Zn, Zr, Al, Si, Sb, U, Be, Mg, Ca, V, Y and of a mixture of these elements.

15. (Previously Presented): A process for manufacturing a thin layer based on nickel oxide by magnetically enhanced sputtering, wherein it uses a ceramic target as claimed in claim 1.

16. (Currently Amended): An electrochromic material produced by process as claimed in claim 15[[;]], wherein said electrochromic material has an anodic coloration as a thin layer based on nickel oxide.

17. (Previously Presented): An electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, wherein said electrochemically active layer is based on nickel oxide obtained by the process as claimed in claim 15 and/or from the essentially ceramic target.

18. (Currently Amended): [[The]] An electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the

H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, wherein said electrochemically active layer is based on nickel oxide, said layer being alloyed with a minority element consisting of a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with anodic coloration, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in claim 1.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Currently Amended): [[The]] An electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, wherein said electrochemically active layer is based on nickel oxide, said layer being alloyed with a minority element selected from the elements belonging to the column one of the Periodic Table, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in claim 1.

21. (Currently Amended): [[The]] An electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, wherein said electrochemically active layer is a metal or an alkaline earth or a semiconductor, the hydrated or hydroxylated oxide of which is protonically conducted, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in claim 1.

22. (Canceled).

23. (New): The target as claimed in claim 1, wherein the target has an electrical resistivity of less than 1 ohm.cm.

24. (New): The target as claimed in claim 1, wherein the target has an electrical resistivity of less than 0.1 ohm.cm.

25. (New): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein the atomic percentage of the minority element is less than 30%, calculated with respect to the nickel.

26. (New): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein the atomic percentage of the minority element is less than 20%, calculated with respect to the nickel.